

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 25

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 105

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 25—Relative to safety in employment.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 6, 2005.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 25, Speier. Employer safety practices.

This measure would urge employers to ensure that their injury prevention programs and other systems for identifying and correcting workplace hazards consider the effects of ultraviolet radiation and ensure that skin cancer prevention policies for outdoor workers are put into operation.

The measure would also urge the appropriate state agencies to utilize existing means of communication with employers to advise employers of the importance of sun safety and skin cancer protections in the workplace.

WHEREAS, The chief cause of skin cancer is exposure to ultraviolet rays (UV) from natural sunlight and artificial sources and UV rays in sunlight cause 90 percent of all skin cancer; and

WHEREAS, According to the American Cancer Society, skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States; and

WHEREAS, One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in his or her lifetime and one American every hour dies from the disease; and

WHEREAS, Unprotected exposure to sunlight over time is pathologic in some cases, as demonstrated by reputable sources including the California Department of Health Services, the United States Army Center for Health Promotion and Prevention Medicine, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the United States National Institutes of Health, the United States Occupational Health and Safety Administration, and the World Health Organization; and

WHEREAS, During April 2000, the United States Department of Health and Human Services in its Ninth Report on Carcinogens, classified solar radiation as a “known human carcinogen” or cancer-causing agent; and

WHEREAS, Building on this declaration, the federal Office of Safety and Health Administration, in July 2000, released formal sun-safety protection guidelines for outdoor workers, which are summarized in a pocket card entitled, “Projecting Yourself Against Harmful Sunlight”; and

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, and the California Department of Health

Services Skin Cancer Prevention Program have published guidelines for sun safety and skin cancer prevention for outdoor workers; and

WHEREAS, The Labor Code requires employers to establish an effective system to identify and correct unsafe and unhealthy work practices; and

WHEREAS, According to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration created in the United States Department of Labor, “unprotected employees working in sunlight risk exposure to UV radiation, which can cause eye damage, premature aging of the skin, and skin cancers, such as melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer, which accounts for more than seventy-five percent (75%) of the deaths due to skin cancer”; and

WHEREAS, Skin cancer is highly preventable when specific sun safety behaviors such as the use of wide-brimmed hats, UV-protective sunglasses, long clothing, and sunscreen are adopted, supplemented by environmental supports such as the provision of shade and the adoption and implementation of sun protection guidelines and policies; and

WHEREAS, Businesses, organizations, and individuals need to understand why and how to guard against unprotected exposure to sunlight; and

WHEREAS, Safety and health precautions add value to business, the workplace, and human life; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That employers are urged to ensure that their injury prevention programs and other systems for identifying and correcting workplace hazards consider the pathologic effects of UV radiation and ensure, as appropriate, that skin cancer prevention policies for outdoor workers are put into operation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature urges the appropriate state agencies to utilize existing means of communication with employers on workplace safety issues to advise employers of the importance of sun safety and skin cancer protections in the workplace.